

Careers Strategy 2025/26

Leading the way in CEIAG for all!



Created by	HOD Careers and Welfare	July 2023
Approved by	Vice Principal	
Version	3.0	
Date of review	September 2025	

THE MANCHESTER COLLEGE CAREERS STRATEGY: 2025

INTENTION OF THE CAREERS STRATEGY:

The purpose of the Careers Strategy is to outline the provision and direction of Careers Education Information Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) in The Manchester College. The demands of the changing workplace, and radical changes in funding, mean that high quality CEIAG is imperative as people adapt to new challenges in education, employment and training. The Manchester College is committed to providing high quality CEIAG on education, training and employment opportunities to prospective, current and former students. We believe that high quality careers guidance raises aspirations and attainment, supports students to achieve their potential, and meets the demands of a changing labour market, supporting the GM skills gaps. This Strategy supports the College's ambition for "careers not courses".

The College's Careers Strategy 2025 is in line with Statutory Guidance, published in December 2017, and incorporates the themes and key priorities within the DfE Careers Strategy. The 8 Gatsby Benchmarks of Career Guidance underpin the DfE Careers Strategy and set the standards for good career guidance for all learning providers.

In line with Statutory Guidance, the Careers and Welfare Service (CEWS) has developed its services and practices to incorporate the key priorities within the Careers Strategy. We meet the requirements of the 8 Gatsby Benchmarks and self-evaluate our progress using the Compass Careers Evaluation Tool. We will engage with The Careers Enterprise Company (CEC) to move the Service forward and network with Greater Manchester partnerships and Bridge GM.

The long-term vision of the Careers Strategy is to develop career opportunities for all students and stakeholders within The Manchester College and complying with the DfE by: *"making the most of everyone's skills and talents."*

OVERVIEW OF CAREERS, EMPLOYABILITY AND WELFARE:

The Careers and Welfare Department is a fully matrix accredited service. Our role is to lead the development of careers education, information and guidance in the College, and support students by removing barriers to progression, learning and employment. Careers and Welfare (CAWS) provides a comprehensive range of high quality, impartial CEIAG to potential and existing students, staff, and partners, including careers guidance, progression, learning opportunities, entry to Higher Education, welfare, housing, benefits, finance, accommodation and immigration for study. CAWS staff are professionally qualified advisers (the majority at Level 6) who specialise in both careers guidance and personal support and based on all The Manchester College sites.

Our Careers and Welfare Site Leaders have an overview of all CEIAG activity, including building better working relationships with our Additional Learning Support team to provide an inclusive service for our SEND learners.

The Manchester College is committed in maintaining 100% of the Gatsby Benchmarks, the national benchmarks for good careers guidance and is Matrix accredited and members of the Careers Development Institute.

Head of Department

Stephen Brobbin

Careers, Employability and Welfare

Careers Leaders

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Careers and Welfare Manager

Careers and Welfare Site Leader

HOW WE SUPPORT THE MANCHESTER COLLEGE'S VISION:

The Careers Strategy is an integral part of the Visions and Objectives of The Manchester College's FE Strategic Plan 2023 and contribute to the overall success and ambitions of the College.

The Careers Strategy will support and develop the careers and employability objectives of The Manchester College, aligned to The Manchester College's FE Strategic Plan 2023. Both the Careers Strategy and FE Strategic Plan aim to support students' achievement in all Curriculum areas.

Our aim is to raise students' aspirations, broaden their horizons and empower them to make informed realistic decisions at all key transition points in learning and work. The Manchester College will provide careers guidance to all students in the college. We will support individuals gain the ability to make informed decisions about academic and technical pathways including apprenticeships.

CEIAG will be embedded in the Tutorial Programme for both academic and technical courses for full cross-college delivery. We will support Curriculum in achieving positive outcomes for students through an extensive tutorial support programme and the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviour (KSB) hour within their existing Study Programme and provide ongoing high-quality support to all Curriculum areas. The College will increase and improve the promotion of the Careers Programme by providing more information to parents and carers to enable learners and stakeholders to understand our offer.

The Manchester College will develop a clear approach to engaging parents and carers throughout the careers programme. Parents and carers have access to the college parent portal, and we will develop way to improve:

- relevant, current careers information
- support information to make the best use of current information
- encouraged them to get involved in opportunities offered

The Manchester College's Strategic plan 2023-2027 outlines the mission, *"to improve lives and economic success through learning and skills"*

The Strategic Vision 2023 comprises of 4 Strategic Themes and Objectives. These are:

Strategic Theme 1- Students "Their journey to 'Amazing' with The Manchester College" Strategic Theme 2- Excellence "Developing a culture of excellence in everything we do" Strategic Theme 3 – Our People and Culture "Working in an 'Amazing' environment" Strategic Theme 4 – Our Community "An 'Amazing' experience for you and our stakeholders".

The Strategic Vision 2023-2027 comprises of 4 Strategic Themes. These are:

- Strategic Theme 1 – Students
- Strategic Theme 2 – Excellence
- Strategic Theme 3 – Our People and Culture
- Strategic Theme 4 – Our City Our Community

THE GATSBY BENCHMARKS:

The Careers Strategy is underpinned by the eight Gatsby Benchmarks listed in the 2014 Gatsby Foundation Report, 'Good Career Guidance', and updated September 2025 as the required standard for good CEIAG within colleges. The eight Benchmarks are:

- 1 A Stable Careers Programme
- 2 Learning from career and labour market information
- 3 Addressing the needs of each student
- 4 Linking curriculum to careers
- 5 Encounters with employers and employees
- 6 Experiences of workplaces
- 7 Encounters with Further and Higher Education
- 8 Personal Guidance

The Gatsby Benchmarks set world-class standards and support colleges to develop and improve their careers and employability provision. By adopting the Benchmarks, we will put employers at the heart of our careers programme. Every learner has opportunities to have meaningful encounters with employers and learn about work, employment and the skills that are valued in the workplace and what it takes to be successful and explore potential career paths.

Our support will be tailored to address the needs of all students, especially disadvantaged students, and we will use data and technology to drive improvements.

The Compass Careers Benchmark Tool enables colleges to evaluate and track their position against the 8 Gatsby Benchmarks of Best Practice. For full Benchmark Evaluation criteria go to <https://cec-compass.zendesk.com/hc/en-gb/articles/12470188432796-What-is-Compass-FE> which details progress against the Assessment Areas and key priorities for improvement. Each Benchmark was evaluated via a range of Assessment Areas relating to the 8 Gatsby Benchmarks. The results of the Evaluation show how our answers compare to all 8 Benchmarks. The results support the College identifying our strengths, areas for improvement and next steps. Our Strategic Aims and Objectives are underpinned by the Gatsby Benchmarks as the standard for best practice.

Workplace Skills Development and Work Experience

Where appropriate, based on course level, 16–18-year-old students will undertake work experience to allow them to develop their technical skills in a role directly related to their vocational course. Work experience is a key part of the study programme and a crucial way of developing transferable employability skills. The development of these skills is high on the governments agenda and is needed by employers and universities across the UK.

The work placement will complement the academic and technical knowledge students gain on their chosen course.

Students will have an KSB Hour (Knowledge, Skills and Behaviour), timetabled, where the teacher can begin to explore a student's skill-based strengths whilst also identifying areas of development

Through work experience students can start to understand how the industry works and test out job roles to support career planning. As part of their studies, students will develop skills outside of their usual comfort zone and gain job references to support future opportunities and progression.

Students are expected to engage with Employers through work experience such as:

- Encounters/Work Related Experience including group trips to an employer, guest speakers, masterclasses, volunteering and more!
- An external Work Placement - From Level 2 upwards, with an employer within the industry being studied. This could vary in length.
- T Level students are placed with an employer from within the industry being studied, for a minimum of 315 hours (45 – 50 days)
- We will present opportunities to teachers to share with students, and we require our students to be preparing and applying for placements every week.
- The college works closely with employers and students to explore what opportunities are available on the Grofar App both in the weekly KSB Hours and in their spare time.
- If students do source their own placement, we need to make sure it's relevant to the programme of study and career aims.
- Alongside the KSB Hour (Knowledge, Skills and Behaviour), our Employability Partnerships and Skills team help students find a suitable experience or placement. Students can make contact on WorkExperience@tmc.ac.uk and expect to meet them in the KSB Hour lessons.

DEPARTMENT STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES: IMPLEMENTATION

- To deliver an innovative and impactful careers service to pre-entry, on-programme and progressing students at all levels through a variety of methods including face-to face, E- guidance, telephone guidance and webinars and careers and employability events.
- To provide an inclusive service to all students with a range of opportunities to engage in Personal Guidance with a professionally qualified careers advisor. This includes actively targeting our Level 3 students who are at the stage of making significant careers decisions.
- To provide 16–18-year-old students with a focused KSB Hour, embedded in the Study Programme Scheme of Learning, to go alongside vocationally contextualised employability skills sessions and/or Employability Modules (produced by Curriculum).
- To achieve Personal Guidance targets with Career interventions including 1:1 career guidance and group tutorials. Priority will be given to Level 3 and Level 3 Year 2 learners (Year 13) to enhance their career and employability prospects.
- The College will further promote the use and understanding of LMI to parents and guardians to support their children in career and learning choices. This will be achieved by a range of literature and bespoke tutorials, focus groups and feedback, software and tasks
- To further develop career hubs for CEIAG provision across all campuses, moving towards the college Vision and increasing the visibility and effectiveness of CEIAG offer to stakeholders
- To develop integral links with Curriculum to ensure collaborative working towards careers provision and to ensure careers and employability support is relevant to Curriculum needs
- To embed equality and diversity throughout, in line with College E&D Policies. We will offer tutorials and activities to actively seek to challenge stereotypical thinking and raise aspirations, such as Women and Girls into Engineering and STEM subjects.

- To highlight the relevance for a wide range of future career paths within the GM skills gaps
- To increase careers support and activities to engage and aid progression for SEND students
- To support The Manchester College intended destinations strategy through effective CEIAG provision via a range of delivery methods
- To grow the digital platform for CEIAG provision through the student portal, social media and communication tools and reach more students in innovative and interactive ways whilst adhering to college policies.
- To forge robust links with employers and external organisations to provide inspiring opportunities for learners to gain work experience and develop work skills
- To develop the employability aspect of CEIAG provision through innovative group, work- shop and 1-1 support, championing the role of LMI, work experience and vocational exploration within careers planning
- To contribute to college tutorial frameworks to provide careers support to all Curriculum areas, including the use of careers software
- To develop a calendar of events to promote CEIAG to students and staff, supporting retention, achievement and (internal) progression of all students
- To implement Quality Assurance Systems to ensure continuous quality improvement in all areas of Service delivery
- To support matrix and Ofsted inspections through inspection-readiness and continuous self-assessment via Quality Assurance, Self-Assessment Reports and monitoring systems
- To monitor and review effectiveness of service through continuous assessment and feedback tools, including client feedback, group tutorial feedback, questionnaires, e-surveys (staff, students and parents), and QDP
- To work closely with Employability Partnership Coordinators, and Recruitment and Outreach Co-ordinators to ensure holistic support is provided, contributing to the overall recruitment, retention and achievement of students
- To work closely with College Support Services to ensure holistic support can be provided, contributing to the overall retention and achievement of students.

CAREERS PROGRAMME

The Manchester College offers a careers programme designed to help you explore a range of opportunities. We work with colleagues and external stakeholders to enhance your career journey. We are Matrix accredited for offering Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) to all students. Our Careers Programme is delivered by qualified, professional, and impartial advisors.

TERM	ACTIVITIES	SUITABLE FOR
CAREER EXPLORATION - The Deal attributes: Proactive and Committed	Autumn: Introduction to the Careers & Wellbeing Service Autumn, Spring, Summer: Career Guidance Appointments - available via our booking system Autumn, Spring, Summer: Career Goal Review - (the careers team will send you an appointment) Autumn, Spring, Summer: PPE Career Guidance Appointments Autumn: Key/C Trial Career Guidance Appointments	All learners All learners All learners All learners All learners
AND FURTHER - The Deal attributes: Collaborative and Ambitious	Summer: UCAS Clearing: Support and advice Autumn, Spring, Summer: UCAS Application and Career Choice Autumn: Personal Statement Support Autumn, Spring, Summer: Tutorial: Managing UCAS Offers Autumn, Spring, Summer: Tutorial: HE Degree Options	All learners All learners All learners All learners All learners
AND FURTHER - The Deal attributes: Collaborative and Ambitious	Autumn, Spring, Summer: Tutorial: Career Language for CVs Autumn, Spring, Summer: Tutorial: Next Step From Choices/Options Autumn, Spring, Summer: Tutorial: Careers and Progression Options Spring: Progression Discussion - with your Achievement Tutor/Personal Tutor	CVs, 3rd Level 3 and Level 1 All learners All learners All learners
THE APPRENTICE PROGRAMME - The Deal attributes: Collaborative and Ambitious	Autumn, Spring, Summer: Tutorial: Overview of Apprenticeships Autumn, Spring, Summer: Outreach Events, such as Industry Week Autumn, Spring, Summer: How to write a CV Autumn, Spring, Summer: How to prepare for an interview Autumn, Spring, Summer: Interview	All learners All learners All learners All learners All learners
EMPLOYABILITY - The Deal attributes: Professional, Respectful and Responsible	Autumn, Spring, Summer: Tutorial: Employability and Skills Autumn, Spring, Summer: Tutorial: Job Landscape and Future Options LMI Autumn, Spring, Summer: Tutorial: Entrepreneurship Autumn, Spring, Summer: Work Placement Autumn, Spring, Summer: Extended Industry Placement Autumn, Spring, Summer: Employer Engagement Services	All learners All learners All learners All learners All learners
EVENTS	September: Industry Week October: T Level Week February: National Apprenticeship Week March: National Careers Week June: HE Awareness Month June: New Student Welcome Day and Year 10 Taster Day	All learners All learners All learners All learners All learners All learners

CAREERS LEADERS:
 Wendy Battersworth, Careers & Wellbeing Manager - w.battersworth@man.ac.uk
 Michael Puddifoot, Careers & Wellbeing Site Leader - m.puddifoot@man.ac.uk

For Careers & Wellbeing queries email careers@man.ac.uk
 For Work Experience queries email workexperience@man.ac.uk

The Manchester College
be smiling

Careers Entitlement Statement

We provide Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) for applicants and all students within The Manchester College. Advisors are professionally qualified, and the service is accredited to the national matrix Quality Standard. We are fully compliant with the Gatsby Benchmarks, the national framework for good CEIAG in all schools and colleges in the UK.

We will provide:

- Accurate careers and course information using labour market information to support you when making your career decision
- Impartial CEIAG throughout your journey with us at The Manchester College
- 1 to 1 career advice and planning
- Support you to access meaningful work placements to help you develop skills in the world of work
- Accurate and timely advice on your progression options into further studies, higher education, apprenticeships or employment
- Access to employers to help you gain insight into the world of work and inform your career aspirations

We will:

- Support you to build your confidence and motivate you with your studies
- Help you to overcome barriers to learning and progression
- Respect your right to confidentiality - all of our appointments take place in the careers hub or you can request a private space if preferred
- Record your intervention on an action plan - this can be shared with you at the end of the session for you to reflect on
- Help you to explore higher education, this includes how to write personal statements and support with the student finance application process
- Offer an on-site Job Club where you can access support with job applications for apprenticeships or employment

Webinars, telephone and email advice 0333 222 4444 careers@man.ac.uk

1:1 Daily appointments for careers and wellbeing issues, Taster Events and Job Clubs

1:1 A full tutorial offer including UCAS, finance for university, careers planning and LMI

You can access our full Careers Strategy and Careers Programme online at: www.bmc.ac.uk/student-life/supportguidance/wellbeing

USING LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION TO SUPPORT STUDENTS:

A key priority of the Careers Strategy is to promote and develop Gatsby Benchmark 2, the use of Labour Market Information (LMI) across all sectors, and to promote and develop employment opportunities within The Manchester College.

Labour Market Information (LMI) is available to The Manchester College current and prospective students, staff, parents and visitors using a variety of mediums, including LMI Data capture cards, Course Guides, LMI tutorials and careers updates. This information is available on the student portal and the college website. LMI tools such as Lightcast, MiDAS and Vector will be used to gather reliable quality, up- to-date LMI about the current and predicted labour market, which can be used to inform students with progression options and careers. The data will also inform and support curriculum development and curriculum planning and decision-making. The college is informed by weekly updates and newsletters from the Business Unit.

LMI will be shared at open events, interview evenings and as part of the CAWS offer. The information will be updated yearly to ensure that the LMI is current and accurate. LMI will be disseminated to a wider audience in particular parents and guardians. Career advisers will work in collaboration with Curriculum links to ensure LMI data is relevant to their Study Programme and to ensure that resources inspire students.

We will also ensure continuous LMI research is maintained throughout the academic year. The LMI data used by the College is updated annually using data provided by Lightcast.

Careers and Welfare adheres to the highest standards of professional behaviour as stated in the Career Development Institute Code of Ethics which incorporate:

- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
- Accountability
- Autonomy
- Confidentiality
- Competence and Continuous Professional Development
- Duty of Care to Clients
- Impartiality

STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY BOARDS

Our sector-specific Stakeholder Advisory Boards help us ensure that our curriculum remains closely aligned with current industry practices and demands. These boards provide valuable insights into business expectations, requirements, and the technical skills and behaviours sought by employers.

Regular meetings throughout the year allow us to discuss the evolving needs of employers and industry professionals. This collaboration enables stakeholders to shape and influence our curriculum, teaching, and learning, ensuring that our students are well-prepared and equipped with the skills required to succeed in the current and future labour markets at local, regional, and national levels.

IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF SERVICE

The Manchester College will evaluate the impact and success of the careers guidance provision by a range of performance measures:

- Ongoing analysis of impact of the service provided through robust statistical information and range of feedback methods and data collection from all stakeholders
- Custom-built Action Planning System and analysis of progression data
- Student and Parent/s or Guardian feedback 1:1 and student feedback in tutorials
- Matrix accreditation and annual Continuous Improvement Checks
- Regular self-evaluation using Compass Evaluation Tool to monitor achievement of Gatsby Benchmarks, with Careers Enterprise Company, The Careers Impact System and the Careers Impact internal leadership review
- Self-Assessment Report - Collaborative and rigorous approach to self-assessment
- The overall college Quality Improvement Plan
- Annual Appraisal and review process
- A robust Quality Assurance System – CAWS quality assurance process including observations and action plan audits to monitor quality and consistency of CAWS advisors.

RESOURCES:

Professionally qualified and experienced Careers and Welfare Advisers who will support learners in career and employability activities and support students in identifying and removing barriers to progression and employment.

The Department uses an electronic Action Planning System to record student impact more efficiently and effectively and links with college systems and reporting mechanisms.

Premises have been improved and redesigned with the development of Career Hubs.

Digital resources will be improved including careers software such as Grofar and Unifrog. A wide and varied range of current resources are designed and produced, including Tutorials and appropriate interactive activities, which meet the needs of all students.

USING TECHNOLOGY WITHIN CEIAG:

A key aspect of the Manchester College's CEIAG provision will be the engagement of current and prospective learners via digital media. The aim is to provide an easily accessible and wide-ranging set of careers resources as well as a greater scope for contact:

- The Careers aspect within the College website and the student portal platform provides a wide range of resources and tutorials such as job and work experience placements, information on careers planning and Labour Market Information.
- The College's social media profiles on Twitter, Tick Tok and Facebook will provide up to date information on developments and upcoming events relating to careers
- The college website will contain course and career information and will offer the increased opportunity for learners to engage in careers webinars and e-guidance facilities
- The use of digital media in CAWS tutorials, to enhance the experience for the learners through the use of digital tools in line with college policies.

NEW OPPORTUNITIES:

The Manchester College will develop wider links within Greater Manchester networks, working collectively with a range of colleges, networks and employers to increase good practice. We will contribute to the success of local, regional and national strategies, including Our People, Our Place, The Digital Strategy and the Statutory Guidance.

Career Hubs and Job Clubs will be dedicated and resourced environments where students can access careers resources and gain support for their career planning and applications for employment opportunities or Study Programmes. The College website will continue to create interactive and engaging experiences which will prioritise career opportunities and Study Programmes. We will offer a wider choice of career planning tools which all students can openly access.

The College will develop digital platforms to engage students and provide information in an accessible way, to support students achieve their future career plans. CAWS has a dedicated section on the student portal which includes sections on course choice, career planning, CVs and interviews, job search, Labour Market Information, work experience, volunteering, and funding for study. Financial and welfare information includes funding for study, benefit entitlement which has implications for their course choice and future career plans.

Careers advisers will build on links with Curriculum to increase employability activities by engaging with employers, improving links with a range of External Providers to promote pathways into higher education and technical pathways, and planning careers fairs and employability events across college. These advancements will enhance the provision of CEIAG within the Manchester College and enable us to implement the DfE Careers Strategy and maximise student's opportunities.

We will continue developing new platforms including.

Student Alumni, connecting all current, future, and past students in creating a community.

Further information and resources:

Membership of CDI and Code of Ethics: www.thecdi.net

Responding to changing governmental priorities and careers strategy:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/careers-guidance-provision-for-young-people-in-schools/careers-guidance-and-access-for-education-and-training-providers>

www.qualityincareers.org.uk

www.matrixstandard.com

www.education.gov.uk

<https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/educators/>

The careers strategy 2023 has been through an Equality impact assessment. September 2025 (SB/WB)

Different formats available on request.